INNOVATING FOR PEACE

PRIORITIES & APPROACH

April 2020
DPPA Innovation Cell
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TOWARDS A CULTURE OF INNOVATION
SPARK IDEAS FOR BUILDING THE FUTURE WE WANT AND THE UNITED NATIONS WE NEED.”

António Guterres,
Secretary-General of the United Nations
To keep up with the scale and speed of innovation, DPPA has established a dedicated capacity to explore, pioneer and leverage new methodologies in support of its mandate delivery, including digital technologies, behavioural insights, immersive visualization, and other cross-cutting means.”

Rosemary A. DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DPPA Strategic Plan 2020-2022
INNOVATING IS:

- Doing different things, and things differently
- Questioning why things are done the way they are
- Creating new value
- Staying relevant
- Futuring peace
FUNCTIONS OF THE DDPA INNOVATION CELL
NEW CONFLICT REALITIES AND CHALLENGES

As the Secretary-General elaborated in his remarks to the General Assembly on his priorities for 2020, new challenges to peace and security endanger 21st-century progress and imperil 21st-century possibilities.

- Existential climate crisis
- Geostrategic tensions & conflict fragmentation
- Spread of misinformation & disinformation
- Deep and growing global mistrust
- Dark side of the digital world
- Fall-out of COVID-19
The Innovation Cell is a catalyst for futuring peace by leveraging new technologies, system theory and human-centered approaches.

**FUTURING PEACE**

**PEOPLE**
Applying human-centered approach & design

**SYSTEMS**
Tackling systemic challenges & opportunities

**MACHINES**
Using tech to leverage conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding

- Moderated experimentation
- Speculative approaches
- Intelligent failure & innovation
FUNCTIONS OF DPPA INNOVATION CELL

The Innovation Cell is helping DPPA maintain dedicated space for exploration and experimentation of new methodologies in implementation of its mandate.

New methodologies and digital applications for prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding

EXPLORING

Capacity-building, co-learning opportunities and acceleration of new ideas

INCUBATING

With DPPA Desks and field presences

DESIGNING, EXPERIMENTING & PROTOTYPING
The Innovation Cell’s work is based on partnerships and brings together multiple disciplines, driven by concrete use cases.

**APPROACH & PRINCIPLES**

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY**
  - ... including computational social science, behavioural insights, cognitive science, system theory, etc.

- **PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION**
  - ... towards an ecosystem for innovation

- **PROBLEM-SOLVING & HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN-ORIENTED**
  - ... innovating with purpose
INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

We see innovation as a broad and multifaceted field, nurtured by various cross-dimensional perspectives.
Innovation was part of DPPA’s efforts long before the Innovation Cell was established. These are some of the new pilot projects:

**AI-Powered Digital Focus Groups & Sentiment Analysis**
Social media and big data analysis in support of peace mediation and dialogue efforts

**Upgrading Briefings through Virtual & Augmented Reality**
Engaging diplomatic experts and wider public through immersive experiences

**Remote Sensing & Conflict Prevention**
Satellite imagery analysis and drone-enabled sensing combined with computer algorithms to address water and climate security issues
We maximize opportunities by contributing to, benefiting from and being part of the wider UN ecosystem of innovation entities.
We put design thinking at the heart of our project implementation to assure needs-based and human-centered innovation.
4 STRATEGY & THEORY OF CHANGE
Innovation requires gradual and long-term investment to achieve transformative change: establishing the infrastructure; advancing staff skills; and scaling new approaches.

1 INSPIRE

• New ways of doing business
• Pilot projects
  • Implemented ongoing DPPA innovation projects
  • Solidified establishment of Innovation Cell
  • Established physical “Innovation Space” for design thinking and ideation

2 BUILD

• Culture of innovation
• Capacity of staff
  • Increased opportunity for learning and experimentation
  • Expanded buy-in from decision-makers

3 GROW

• Innovation at scale
• Sustainable change
  • Embedded and long-lived innovation
  • Diversified partnerships with innovators and tech companies outside the UN system
  • Scaled innovation projects in the field and transferable methodologies
Innovation requires communication across the board to share lessons learnt, inspire new ideas, and forge partnerships.

**AUDIENCE**
- Staff
- Senior leadership
- UN Innovation Network
- Wider UN family

**CHANNELS**
- DPPA iSeek (intranet)
- Brownbag seminars / training sessions
- Innovation labs
- Innovation guidance
- Innovation Group

**INTERNAL**

**EXTERNAL**
- Beneficiaries
- Members States (including donors)
- Ecosystem partners

- Medium channel (blog)
- UNIN website/blog
- DPPA social media handle
- DPPA Politically Speaking
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MEASURING SUCCESS
HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

Monitoring and evaluating success and failures are key for us, understanding that innovation is an ongoing process.

- **RELEVANT**: New way or empirical approach to prevent or end violent conflict
- **ORIGINAL**: Doing different things and doing things differently
- **DESIRABLE**: Clear use-case, problem-definition based on needs
- **FEASIBLE**: Technically and organizationally doable
- **BENEFICIAL**: Helps the wider peace and security community
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY**: Draws on multiple disciplines
- **COLLABORATIVE**: Public-private partnerships considered, and regionally diverse
- **MEASURABLE**: End user-needs considered with baseline, specific targets and timeframe
- **SCALABLE**: Method is transparent and open source
- **SUSTAINABLE**: Maintenance and follow-up costs considered
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